

Asheville-Buncombe Homeless Coalition
Meeting Minutes: January 5, 2010

Welcome: Brian Alexander welcomed the group.

December 2009 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Emergency Overflow Shelter through Churches: Reverend Joe Hoffman of First Congregational United Church of Christ stated that there's interest in the church community currently to provide overflow shelter during this cold weather and asked if there is need for that at this time. Responses were:

- Western Carolina Rescue Ministries is able to handle everyone coming in for help at this point.
- Salvation Army is filled to capacity in regular and overflow shelter.
- Vets' Restoration Quarters is adding 16 new emergency beds, but existing emergency beds are filled to capacity at this time.
- Wet shelter discussion: A HOPE is concerned about people who aren't making choices that will allow them to come inside and whose needs would be too high for volunteer groups like churches. WCRM does have 4 wet shelter beds that are underutilized, but clients have to be medically evaluated and brought in by the police.
- Amy Sawyer will ask the City and County to open up emergency shelters if more space becomes necessary.
- Scott Rogers said the former ABCCM shelter on Coxe Avenue can be reopened temporarily for space as well. WCRM can provide staffing for the building. Should WCRM exceed capacity by 20 or so individuals, Scott and Micheal Woods will coordinate this emergency plan.
- Any time we enact an emergency plan, Amy should be notified so she can communicate the plan through City and County channels.
- Approximately 10 – 15 people are camping and unsheltered but receiving services at A HOPE; presumably another 15 or so are camping and not receiving services at all.

Western Carolina Rescue Ministries: Micheal Woods is currently the Interim Executive Director, and is focusing 2010 on helping people who want to help themselves and people who can't help themselves. WCRM staff is working with each individual receiving services to develop a plan to move out of homelessness. Under the new policy, clients who get a bed through the lottery are able to keep that bed for 3 nights, after which they're eligible for a lottery for overflow space.

Just Home in the Mountains Project Update: Rebecca Williams is coordinating this community performance project which is a fundraiser for Homeward Bound based on stories collected from the homeless and housed communities. 12% of participants currently signed on are homeless or formerly homeless, and Rebecca would like to increase participation from this population; please contact her at bbinfo@hbofa.org with referrals.

Continuum of Care Update: Amy Sawyer stated that our Continuum of Care grant was approved, with all renewals accepted and 1 new project with approval pending. Part of what made our grant successful was our data in HMIS; currently, 2200 unduplicated people are in HMIS. Amy is able to pull reports from the system and wants the data to be useable, so if you have questions or would like to see reports, please contact her.

Point in Time Count: If you're participating in the Point in Time Count on January 27th, please attend the training on January 14th at the Housing Authority at noon.

Homeless Persons' Memorial Service: Rescheduled for January 30th at 2 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville.

Next Regular Meeting: March 2, 2010 at 12:30 p.m. at United Way. The Stakeholders' Meeting in February will supplant the Homeless Coalition's regular meeting.